

Lela Manoli

Purchasing Support for Retail and Payroll Clerk aka Jack of all Trades



You could describe Lela Manoli's life as wacky, but beautiful and often hilarious. It revolves around her husband of eight years, Mike, and her two children, Tommy, seven years old, and Olivia, five years old. She shared the smartest thing she has ever done was to marry Mike, who's an Executive Chef at the Denver Zoo. "He's just a great guy, such a compassionate caring human being, he'd do anything for anyone," she said. "And my kids are the best; they're so much fun to be around, they keep me young."

When Lela is not at work, she spends time with her kids - laughing with them and encouraging their creativity. Activities include taking nature walks and doing arts and crafts. Another favorite activity is bowling with kids and playing in family Wii tennis tournaments. Her son is quickly getting better at this interactive video game than Mom and Dad, but Dad plays from his recliner. What's Lela's excuse?

When there is time in the family's busy schedule, Lela enjoys eating a delicious family dinner prepared by her chef husband while talking, listening and laughing with her children. Other fun-filled family gatherings revolve around her father, step-mother and her three younger brothers and three older sisters and their offspring - all who live in the Denver area.

As a child, Lela described herself as a total tomboy who played tough with the boys. She didn't take grief from anybody. She shared that her daughter is like her in that regard. However, she also liked girly things as her favorite toy was a Barbie town house that she still has. Lela became a pro at making mud pies. (Could that be why she married a chef?)

When she takes time for herself, Lela reads. She said, "I love to read, put me in a corner with a book, and I'm perfectly happy." Her favorite authors include John Irving and Wally Lamb, and her favorite magazine is *Vanity Fair*, an American magazine of pop culture, fashion, and politics. With this love, it's not a surprise that Lela said that if she wasn't a K-M/SSA employee, she would like to run a bookstore.

Lela may get her sense of humor from her love of Jerry Lewis, who is best-known for his slapstick humor in stage, screen, television, radio and recordings. She said, "I love old Jerry Lewis movies, I have always loved him, he's the funniest person in the world."

Work history

Like many Denver natives, Lela worked at the zoo. She got tired of baby sitting and took a job at the zoo in 1979 making sno-cones and cotton candy. Lela quickly earned the title of cotton candy

queen. Over the next several years, she was promoted from the concession department to operations, where she worked in the money room. After graduating from high school, she made the decision to leave Denver and go to college in Grand Junction (Colorado) at Mesa State College. After one year, she quit the academia life to fulfill a dream of attending cosmetology school. She returned to Denver to achieve that goal. But that wasn't for her either, and she came back in 1991 to work in the Corporate Office of K-M and SSA.

Some of her favorite things include Mexican food. She said the hotter the better! "I'm Hispanic, we were raised on beans and tortillas my whole life," she added. She is a hockey fan because it's fast paced. "I like the fights!"

A favorite TV show is the *First 48 Hours*, a reality television show that focuses on real crimes and investigations. She laughingly added that another favorite is *SpongeBob SquarePants*, the animated cartoon series designed for kids. Lela's hobbies include laundry (!?!) and doing outside yard work.

Lela said her friends and family would describe her as a funny and good-hearted person who's a good listener. She certainly fits that description.



Lela was the baby of the family — until her three brothers were born.



Lela's most valued possessions are her husband and her children.

